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General Assembly

Official Records

Disarmament Commission

208th Meeting
Wednesday, 11 December 1996, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. García . . . . . (Colombia)

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. García (Colombia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Election of the Chairman and other officers

The Acting Chairman: At our last meeting, Mexico, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, informed the Commission that the Group had endorsed the candidacies of Cuba and Ecuador for the vice-chairmenship of the Bureau for 1997.

If I hear no comment, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to elect by acclamation the representatives of the aforementioned countries as Vice-Chairmen of the Commission for 1997.

It was so decided.

The Acting Chairman: Since there are no further nominations at the moment, I invite members once more to make every effort to expedite the nominations of the candidates for the vacant posts of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur.

Draft provisional agenda for the 1997 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission

The Acting Chairman: At present, the provisional agenda for the 1997 substantive session contains the following three substantive items: "The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned."; "The fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament."; and "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of United Nations General Assembly resolution 51/45 N."

At our last meeting, the United States representative proposed that the words "Principles and guidelines for" be placed at the beginning of the first substantive agenda item, which would then read:

> "Principles and guidelines for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned".

I would recall that, at that meeting, the United States delegation was given time to consider the statements made with regard to that proposal. Does the representative of the United States wish to comment?

Mr. Aronsohn (United States of America): I wish to thank you, Sir, for suspending Monday's organizational meeting until today.

As promised, we reported to Washington on Monday's meeting, underscoring everyone's concerns over our proposal and the idea that we were near a consensus on a full provisional agenda for the 1997 United Nations Disarmament Commission session.

As a result, I am glad to report that I have instructions to withdraw our proposal of Monday and to accept the wording of the item on nuclear-weapon-free zones, as outlined.

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The Acting Chairman: I should like to express, on my own behalf and on that of Ambassador Hoffmann and all our colleagues here, our appreciation for the efforts of the United States delegation to help us continue our work for next year's substantive session.

After hearing the statement of the representative of the United States, if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Disarmament Commission wishes to adopt the draft provisional agenda (A/CN.10/1996/CRP.6) for its 1997 substantive session, as orally amended.

The provisional agenda, as orally amended, was adopted.

Organizational matters

The Acting President: Since the Disarmament Commission has agreed on the three substantive agenda items for the 1997 substantive session, it may wish, as in previous years, to continue having three working groups to deal with these three subjects. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to establish the following subsidiary bodies:

Committee of the Whole, which will deal with agenda items 7 and 8, as well as with any other issues concerned, in an informal manner; Working Group I, which will deal with agenda item 4, "The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned."; Working Group II, which will deal with item 5, "The fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament."; and Working Group III, which will deal with item 6, "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N."

It was so decided.

The Acting Chairman: In view of the fact that we have received no nominations from the regional groups, the appointment of the Chairmen of the subsidiary bodies will be taken up at a later stage.

As members will recall and as I mentioned at our last meeting, according to the provisions of the adopted reform programme, all organizational matters should be concluded at the organizational session of the Disarmament Commission. However, in view of the fact that some issues are still pending at this stage, it might be advisable for the Commission to suspend this organizational session until a later date so that sufficient time will be available for further work on the outstanding matters.

If there is no objection, I shall take it that it is the wish of the Disarmament Commission to suspend the 1996 organizational session at this stage and to resume it at a later date.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.